

What is claimed is:

1. An automatic stop/start controller for a vehicle engine having an air conditioner which employs a coolant or driving force of said engine to control the air temperature in a vehicle interior, said engine capable of stopping and starting without operation of an ignition key, wherein after a predetermined automatic stop condition is satisfied and said engine is automatically stopped, a control unit maintains said engine in a stopped state as long as the duration of the automatic stop of said engine is shorter than an automatic stop maximum time period that is based on air temperature at an inlet of said air conditioner.

2. The automatic stop/start controller for the engine as defined in Claim 1, wherein said control unit executes control by means of the automatic stop maximum time period only when the air temperature at said inlet of said air conditioner is higher than a predetermined temperature.

3. The automatic stop/start controller for the engine as defined in Claim 1, wherein said motor generator assists said engine in generating power at least during running of said vehicle.

4. The automatic stop/start controller for the engine as defined in Claim 2, wherein said motor generator assists said engine in generating power at least during running of said vehicle.